

Defending The Faith Series

The Apologetics Pyramid

GOSPEL

RESURRECTION

REVELATION

THEISM

WORLDVIEWS

TRUTH



Defending The Faith: What is truth?

The Goal Of Apologetics

To establish the truthfulness of Christianity

Why is truth important?

1. Someone who doesn't believe that truth exists will not believe us when we claim the Christianity is true
2. A personal relationship with truth in Jesus Christ is impossible unless we believe that truth is real and discoverable (John 14:6)
3. Unless truth is real, how are we going to tell "the truth" about Christianity, God, and His Son?

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

What is truth?

- Truth is “telling it like it is”
- Truth matches reality (i.e. matches facts and evidence)

CORRESPONDENCE VIEW = statements correspond to reality

Biblical Examples Of The Correspondence View

- Genesis 42:16
- Acts 5:1-4
- Genesis 2:17 & 3:4
- Exodus 20:16
- 1 Timothy 6:20-21
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

Is truth what works?

- Confuses what truth *is* with what truth *does*

Is truth found in good intentions?

- Declares that truth is not what we *actually* say, but in what we *intend* to say
- Mistakenly focuses on what we intend to say rather than on what we actually say
- If true, there could never be a sincere, well-intending person who is wrong
- Lies can have good intentions, but this does not make a lie true

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

Is truth a matter of perspective?

- The statement boomerangs and destroys itself because the statement would apply equally to everyone else on earth

APOLOGETICS TIP: Develop an eye for statements that boomerang and destroy themselves!

- If something is true, it is true for **all people** at **all times** and in **all places** regardless of a person's awareness or beliefs.

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

What are the barriers to truth?

1. Agnosticism: Nobody Can Discover Truth

- Claims that truth can't be known ... nor can anyone have knowledge of God
- Agnosticism self-destructs ... boomerang principle
- The very assertion that “humans can't know truth” is a truth statement in itself
- When the agnostic makes a negative statement asserting he “can't know about truth or God,” he presupposes knowledge about truth and God

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

2. Skepticism: Doubt Everything That Claims To Be True

- This is the belief that we should doubt everything, including the truth about Christianity
- Skepticism self-destructs ... boomerang principle
- To hold off on making a decision about the world is to make a decision about the world
- Jesus combated skepticism in His ministry
Luke 24:38-39, 42

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

3. Relativism: Truth Is Different For Everyone

- This view makes truth a matter of one's own perspective


Three different kinds of relativism:

1. Truth is relative to time
2. Truth is relative to persons
3. Truth is relative to location

- Relativism is self-destructive ... boomerang principle
- If truth is relative to something, what is it relative to?

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

4. Subjectivism: Truth Is What Feels Right

- Belief that feelings, emotions and intuition are the keys to discovering what is true
 - Feelings are a poor test for what is true because feelings and emotions change
 - What if two people have different feelings about the same statement?
 - It is obvious that bad news can be true
- 

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

Are those who believe in absolute truth intolerant and narrow-minded?

- Truth is narrow by definition
- The one making the statement that “absolute truth is too narrow” is in fact giving an absolute truth
- Those charging Christians with intolerance are confused about the meaning of intolerance
- To be labeled as intolerant simply because you disagree with someone is mistaken

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

Questions To Ask Regarding Views Of Truth

1. Pragmatic: Truth is what works

ASK: “Lying may work at times. Does your view make those lies true?”

2. Intention: Truth is found in good intentions

ASK: “Could there ever be a well-intending person who is wrong?”

ASK: “Liars can have good intentions. Do their good intentions make the lie true?”

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

3. Perspective: Truth is a matter of one's perspective

This view corresponds with relativism. Ask questions under relativism.

4. Correspondence: Truth is that which corresponds to reality

Truth is discovered by asking if someone's statements correspond with reality ... if facts support statement, it should be considered truth.

If something is true, it is true for all people at all times and in all places regardless of a person's awareness or beliefs.

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

Questions To Ask Regarding Barriers to Truth

1. Agnosticism: Nobody can discover truth

ASK: “Are you certain? How can you be certain if you can’t know for sure that anything is true?”

2. Skepticism: Doubt everything that claims to be true

CHALLENGE: “You must, therefore, be skeptical about your own skepticism.”

ASK: “Do you doubt everything that claims to be true? If not, then why do you accept some things to be true?”

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

3. Relativism: Truth is different for everyone

ASK: “What is truth relative to? Is it relative to time, persons or location?”

ASK: “Why is truth relative? Why isn’t it the same for *all people* in *all places* at *all times*?”

ASK: “Doesn’t truth need to correspond with reality? If not, why not?”

ASK: “Would you say ‘there is no absolute truth’? How, then, can you make this absolute statement about truth?”

ILL: Like saying “never say the word never” or “I can’t speak any English” or “language doesn’t have meaning”

Defending The Faith: What is truth?

4. Subjectivism: Truth is what feels right

ASK: “Since feelings and emotions change, does truth change along with our feelings?”

ASK: “What if two people have different feelings about the same statements?”

ASK: “Can bad news be true?”

ASK: “If only what feels good is true, do you reject all news that makes you feel unpleasant?”